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FIRST QUARTER
JANUARY 2009

Home Health *focus*



ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF HOME HEALTH NURSES
AND THEIR PATIENTS

Steps for becoming an ORGANIZED caregiver

It's difficult to manage our lives at times; however, if you're a caregiver, you may find the following steps on how to get organized invaluable.

Step 1

Use a notebook with dividers or binder with pockets to hold important information about your patient and you won't have to search for papers that could become misplaced or accidentally discarded. Make separate sections for contacts, prescriptions and medicine dosage, medical appointments including medicine dosage, notes and questions for the healthcare professional.

Step 2

Make the most of your time at the doctor's office. Call before you leave to see if the doctor is on schedule to avoid sitting in the waiting room for a long time. Bring a tote

bag filled with projects you can do anywhere. Pay bills, update your pocket calendar, catch up on calls outside the waiting room, read or simply relax.

Step 3

Type an emergency contact list with phone numbers of medical personnel, relatives and nearby neighbors who have volunteered to help in a pinch. Laminate it and place one by each telephone so you don't have to remember the numbers.

Step 4

Buy a large monthly calendar with large spots to enter doctor's visits and other important dates in large, legible writing. Post it where you can see it daily so there will be no surprises or missed appointments.



Step 5

If your patient is ambulatory, move glasses and plates to lower cabinets. Install shelves in the lower portions of vanities to store medication with child-proof locks on the handles. Your patient will feel more self-sufficient if things are accessible and save you steps.

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ALS TEAM Competent Care

On October 18, 2008, Tsitsi Muradzikwa led Team Competent Care on the ALS 9th Annual *Walk to Defeat ALS* in Irvine, but the fight against this killer disease is never over! The generous support and overwhelming sense of community that made our October 18th *Walk* a big success will go far during the year to help our PALS and families through 2009. As of December 30, 2008, the Walk has raised more than \$240,000. You can still make donations on their website at <http://walkoc.alsa.org>. *You did a great job, Tsitsi, as usual!*

New year, new ATTITUDE

We can't put a stopper on aging. No matter how many anti-aging creams, treatments and surgeries we have, we're still getting older. However, we can do something about our attitude on aging.

A new study shows that overall seniors say they feel about 13 years younger than their actual age (women felt closer to their actual age than men). The six-year project assessed 516 men and women aged 70 and older.

"People who feel younger than they actually are showed higher levels of satisfaction with aging over the time period studied," said Jacqui Smith, a psychologist at the University of Michigan who co-authored the study.

Some of the oldest participants said they felt even younger over time; however, those in poor health said they felt closer to their chronological age.

To feel younger, stay active, maintain a positive attitude and use the following ten tips:

1. Ignore non-essential numbers such as age, weight and height. Let the doctors worry about them!
2. Keep cheerful friends and stop associating with grouchy people who only pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle.
4. Enjoy the simple things such as a beautiful sunrise or sunset, quiet walks, flower blooming and birds singing.
5. Laugh often, long and loud.
6. We all experience grief. Cry, endure, grieve and move on. The only one who will be with you forever is yourself. Be ALIVE while you are.
7. Let your home be your refuge. Surround yourself with what you love: family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants and hobbies.
8. Cherish your health. Preserve it if it's good. Improve it if it's not. If you can't improve it on your own, get help.
9. It's important to take trips – large and small. However, don't be a traveler on a guilt trip. Forgive others and yourself. Let negative feelings go.
10. Tell people you love that you love them. ♥



Employee SPOTLIGHT



Tsitsi Muradzikwa Intake Coordinator

Her family lived in Zimbabwe until they moved to Seattle. Her father first attended the University of Washington and eventually became a professor. In 1977, Tsitsi was born.

In 1978, they returned to Zimbabwe until Tsitsi was seven. Then they moved to Long Beach when her father was offered a position at Cal State Long Beach. Tsitsi then grew up as a California girl.

"I attended college, but needed a change." She became a Staff Counselor at Olive Crest, a non-profit that helps abused children.

Within two years, Tsitsi was a House Manager. Two years later she became a Case Manager.

The position was stressful and more than full time. She also worked part time as a lab assistant at Long Beach Memorial. "I wanted to get my degree and needed balance."

She quit her jobs to focus on school, however, wanted health care experience. Tsitsi decided to work part time.

In April 2007, she became Intake Coordinator for Competent Care three days a week, while she furthered her education. "This position and my degree will help me realize my dreams of becoming a health educator." ♥₂

Competent CARE bucks

You can now earn Competent Care **CARE bucks** when you do the following:

- ♥ Go over and beyond what is expected of you (for example, taking a shift at the last minute)
 - ♥ Turning in notes by Monday at 5 p.m.
 - ♥ Referring a patient
 - ♥ Participating in inservices held at the Costa Mesa office
- CARE bucks will be awarded quarterly. Cash them in for gift cards from Barnes & Noble, Target, gas cards, Best Buy or Home Depot. Winners will be acknowledged in upcoming issues. ♥

Honoring James WADSLEY

On December 18, 2008, an Open House brunch was held in our office to honor James Wadsley, a resident of Fountain Valley. He was the catalyst for starting Competent Care Home Health Nursing in 1988.

Wadsley, 1½ pounds at birth and in critical condition, was cared for by Lynette LaRoche, Cheri Sizelove, Pat Hudson and Mina Patel. The RNs became friends and eventually formed the partnership that began Competent Care.

Wadsley just graduated Magna Cum Laude from Chapman University with a Bachelor's Degree in American History.

"James' parents were concerned about the quality of life he was going to have," LaRoche adds. "We all fell in love with this little wonder and did whatever James needed to survive."

Wadsley stayed in contact with Kennard through the years. When he called about his recent

graduation, Wadsley thanked her and said these four nurses gave him a life no one expected him to have. It was then Kennard decided to tie Wadsley's graduation to their 20th Anniversary celebration at year's end.

Kennard says, "It seemed only fitting to honor James. He's the reason we are able to care for many ill and injured patients today!" ♥



James and Mr. Wadsley



Mr. Wadsley, James and Denise



Katherine and Deborah



Denise, Stephen and Krystal



Karen, Leslie, son Seth and Kat



Employee CELEBRATIONS

New HIRES:

Rebecca Makawa	2/10/08
Teresa Miricho	11/25/08
Monica Mutambara	11/28/08
Susan Sease	11/29/08
Debrath Franklin	11/06/08
Kevin Ho	11/01/08
Chris Carter	10/21/08
Ruth Jones.....	09/23/08

BIRTHDAYS

January

Cindy Rebollo	01/08
David White	01/10
Karen Vicente	01/11
Brita Palomino	01/31

February

Regina James.....	02/07
Felicia Lane	02/12
Penny Llanos	02/16
Linda Goh	02/17
Lizette Rodriguez.....	02/17
Nancy Gorrell.....	02/24

March

Kimberly Riley.....	03/01
Donna O'Hare	03/09
Deborah Martinez	03/15
Geraldine Pitts	03/15
Susan Tunstall	03/15
Pamela Norman.....	03/21
Debrath Franklin	03/24
Denise Kennard	03/28

ANNIVERSARIES

January

Jovey Dalton	2003
Donna O'Hare.....	2007
Geraldine Pitts	2006
Jackie Valenzuela.....	2008
Lynette LaRoche.....	1988

February

Jen Quan	2008
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March

N/A

Nursing FUN facts

Did you know...

Research indicates that advanced practiced RNs can provide from 60-80% of primary care services as well – **or better** – than physicians and at a lesser cost.



ORGANIZED caregiver

workers. Make notes as they complete a project to whether they were timely, efficient and the quality of their work.

Step 7

Set up automatic bill payment. Check with your patient first, but you'll save a lot of time if you can utilize automatic monthly bill

payments. This is easy if there's a set fixed monthly income and the same bills to be paid each month. Then the only task left is to take a few minutes each week to balance the checkbook.



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Step 6

Keep a home maintenance file to save time and assist others who might be helping. Include contact names, companies, telephone numbers, email addresses and the work provided of plumbers, electricians, carpenters and other home maintenance



Find ways to go GREEN

All-purpose cleaners can take care of a multitude of household messes, but many also contribute to indoor air pollution, are poisonous if ingested and can be harmful if inhaled or touched. Here are a few tips to finding cleaners that are just as effective, but won't pollute our air.

Full ingredient disclosure: Buy products from companies that list ingredients by name on the package or their web site. This may be difficult, as cleaning product manufacturers aren't required to list specific ingredients on their labels. If you can't find specific ingredient

listings, choose products that tell you what's not inside, for instance: "No ammonia," "No chlorine," "No petrochemicals" and "No sodium lauryl or laureth sulfate."

Dye-free and fragrance-free products: Dyes and fragrances are unnecessary additives usually derived from petroleum. Fragrances also may contain hormone-disrupting phthalates.

Third-party certifications:

Independent groups such as Green Seal, Cradle To Cradle, the Leaping Bunny and the EPA's Design for the Environment program analyze product ingredients and certify chemicals that don't pose harm to your health or environment.



HEART Notes



By
Denise Kennard,
Administrator

With what's going on in the world today, it would do us good to be grateful for what we have and count our blessings.

In ancient times, the period between the old and New Year was viewed as a struggle between chaos and order, in which order always prevailed.

Today, many look at the New Year as a time to make resolutions, reassess their lives and lists goals to accomplish.

The coming of a new year represents an opportunity to begin again. It is a time to discard the old and align with new possibilities. If we believe we can change our lives, we can leave our mistakes behind.

We start the New Year with a clean slate; we can begin new experiences.

We make resolutions to quit smoking, lose weight or fulfill goals. However, the New Year can also be an opportune time to pursue emotional, spiritual and intellectual growth. It is within our power to walk a more conscious, grounded path. We can choose to be happy, even in the worst of times, rather than looking for happiness.

My hope is that the New Year will bring order, along with a stable world economy and peace for people of all nations. Let's make this New Year one of hope, faith and miracles. ♥

If you have a suggestion for our newsletter, please email Basia Christ, Director of Marketing, at bchrist@competentcare.com.